THE

HISTORY

OF A

CORPORATION

OF

SERVANTS.

Discovered a few Years ago in the Interior Parts of SOUTH AMERICA.

Containing some very Surprising EVENTS and Extraordinary CHARACTERS.

By

GLASGOW:

Printed for JOHN GILMOUR, and sold by him and the other Booksellers in Town and Country.

MDCCLXV.

THE HISTORY OF A

ADVERTISEMENT.

The Reader will find himſelf obliged to the Author of the following Hiſtory, for the pains he hath taken to render it as entertaining, and ſentimental as poſſible. With this view he hath entirely avoided the uſe of foreign names, often hard to pronounce, and when pronounced wholly without meaning. Inſtead of this, when he had occaſion to mention particular ranks of men, offices, or cuſtoms, he choſe to expreſs them by what did moſt exactly correſpond with them in our own country. By this means the narrative, diſencumbred of definitions or circumlocutions, is rendered quite eaſy and intelligible.

1794 13. At Princeton, in the 74th year of his age, the Rev. John Witherſpoon, D. D. and Preſident of Naſſau-Hall, New Jerſey. This Gentleman was well known, as a man of genius, an eminent divine, and a ſagacious ſtateſman. Nov. 1794

BRITISH MUSEUM

THE HISTORY OF A CORPORATION OF SERVANTS.

INTRODUCTION.

THE skill of an author, like that of a merchant, lies chiefly in judging with readineſs and certainty, what kind of commodities, and in what quantity, any particular age or place is able and willing to receive. This I have, of late, made very much my ſtudy, with regard to our own age and country, and the reſult of my enquiry is as follows. There are two ſorts of ſubjects for which there is a general demand in Great Britain at this time, *viz.* (1.) Biography, if any thing may be ſo

called that gives an account of the lives of perſons that never exiſted, but in the imagination of the authors. This is, indeed, a moſt fruitful ſubject, and under the various titles of Hiſtories, Lives, Adventures, Memoirs, &c. teaches people how to live after any imaginable plan. (2.) The other is the formation of ſchemes and projects, to be carried on by ſubſcription, for the good of mankind, which never were ſo favourably received as at preſent, the abortion or miſmanagement of nine in ten of them not having in the leaſt abated the ardor of the publick. If any be of opinion, that new diſcoveries in the ſcience of morals, for the ſupport of infidelity, are as favourably received as any of theſe, ſuch muſt be told, that they are but ſuperficial obſervers, or under the prejudice of religious enthuſiaſm. The diſcoveries here pointed at, have been of late years ſo various, ſo contradictory and ſo ſhort-lived, that they really raiſe very little curioſity. As an inſtance of this, the reader is deſired to recollect if he can, the moſt extraordinary thing of the kind that ever was attempted. A great living author, David Hume eſqr. not long ago, made health, cleanlineſs, and broad ſhoulders capital virtues, and a running ſore an unpardonable crime; yet was it but little taken notice of when firſt publiſhed, and is now almoſt wholly forgotten.

Therefore, an author is undoubtedly happy who hath hit upon, or happens to be furniſhed with a ſubject ſuited to the taſte of the age. This I humbly

bly presume to be my own case. I have had the good fortune, lately, to obtain distinct information of a most extraordinary history, which also may perhaps lay a foundation for some new scheme, or, at least, for mending and cobling those which are now cracked and old. The only misfortune that it labours under is that it is true; for I remember the lofty and sonorous earl of Shaftesbury, whose memory I greatly revere, tells us there is much more truth in fiction than in fact. The meaning of this is, that authors of taste and genius like himself, employing their fancy in delineating feigned characters, give ordinarily a juster view of nature than tedious relaters of what really happened.

This loss however, I trust, will be abundantly made up by the extraordinary and wonderful nature of the passages I am to relate, which, it is to be hoped, will have the effect of fiction in enlivening the imagination of the writer, and, indeed, very possibly, may be mistaken for fiction by many readers. The truth is, I hope there is a singular felicity in my subject in every respect. If the excellency of history, according to lord Shaftesbury, lies in its being like fiction, and the excellency of fiction in its being like to real facts, according to all other men, the subject in hand must needs excel, as it partakes of both these characters. It will be like truth, because it is true; and it will be like fiction, because the same train of events, perhaps, never happened in any other place or nation.

To introduce myſelf to my ſubject, and inform the reader how I came by the knowledge of it, he may be pleaſed to recollect, That in the year 1741, when commodore (afterwards lord) Anſon made a voyage round the world, one of the ſhips of his ſquadron, called the Wager, was caſt away upon a deſert iſland in the South Seas. The greateſt part of the crew who were ſaved lengthened the long-boat, and made a long and dangerous voyage thro' the ſtreights of Magellan, to Brazil. As they were often obliged to ſwim aſhore for proviſions and water, it happened that, at one time, there were to the number of fourteen of them aſhore upon a part of the coaſt very far South, near the mouth of the ſtreights. Having ſtayed all night, unfortunately next morning the wind blew ſo hard in ſhore, that only ſix of the fourteen were able to get aboard, and the veſſel was obliged to go away and leave the other eight.

It is needleſs here to inſiſt upon the various accidents they met with in this perilous ſituation. The difficulty of obtaining food, without which they muſt very ſoon have died: the mean and ſcanty proviſion with which nature will be ſuſtained, when there is no more or better to be had: the inventive faculty of man for ſupplying his wants when reduced to abſolute extremity, and a hundred other things which have been repreſented in all poſſible lights by other writers of adventures. Let it ſuffice, therefore, to ſay that, in proceſs of time, four of them were killed

led by the inhabitants of the country, and the remaining four taken priſoners. After changing their maſters ſeveral times, they came at laſt into the hands of one who carried them a great way off to the capital of an empire, and the court of a powerful prince. There they lived many years, learned the language, and had occaſion to ſee the manners of the country. Two of them, at laſt, acquired ſuch a degree of favour, that, in compliance with their earneſt requeſt, they were ſent to the Portugueze ſettlements, and came from thence to Great Britain.

One of theſe perſons, who was a man of tolerable education, as well as good ſenſe and comprehenſion, coming to live in my neighbourhood, communicated to me what follows of this hiſtory. In general he told me the conduct and characters of men, bating ſome little differences of faſhion and modes of addreſs, which are ever changing in every country, were much like what they are among ourſelves. Court favour was precarious and changeable. Intereſt and ambition prevailed more in obtaining places of power and profit, than modeſt and peaceable merit. Cold and ſober men gathered wealth, and crept up, by ſlow but ſure ſteps, to ſtation and dignity; while the lively ſprightly fellows threw away all that they had, and ſoon became contemptible to others and uſeleſs to themſelves. The knowledge of the world was of very little benefit; for tho' every claſs of men could clearly diſcern the errors that adhered to thoſe of a different rank, they could

could ſcarcely obſerve, and never would imitate their commendable qualities. For example, ſays he, a profuſe, diſeaſed, needy Lord would ſpeak with infinite contempt of the meanneſs of ſoul, and hardneſs of heart frequently to be found in traders and men of buſineſs, but never once thought of following their example in ſobriety, application, and regularity in the diſtribution of their time, to which they manifeſtly owed all their ſucceſs. So that, upon the whole, he concluded that human nature in all ages and in all places was the ſame. A ſage remark the reader will ſay, but I can eaſily remember to have heard it before.

There was however one claſs of men in that nation, whoſe conſtitution as a body, and many of whoſe characters and practices were of the moſt extraordinary kind, *viz.* the SERVANTS. Their ſtate and conduct, at the time which fell under his own obſervation, were ſo ſingular that they excited his curioſity; and induced him to inquire with great care into their condition, as far back as hiſtory could trace them. This is what I am now to communicate to the publick, being willing that my book ſhould be buried in oblivion, or burned with diſgrace, if a ſtory can be produced equal or even ſimilar to it in any other age or country.

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

Of the original State of the Servants, and their Erection into a Corporation.

IN very early times, of which there are ſtill ſome accounts handed down by tradition, the Servants were in a ſtate not much different from what they are at preſent among us. It does not appear that ever they were ſlaves, or were treated with exceſſive rigour or ſeverity. They were trained up in ſome acquaintance with, and applied themſelves to ſuch work as they ſeemed to be fitted for by the turn of their minds, and the ſtrength or agility of their bodies. They were choſen or hired by every family as they pleaſed, made a voluntary agreement, and were employed in doing what was neceſſary of every kind. They were paid as they and the family could agree, eating of their own labours, and were cheriſhed and careſſed in proportion as they deſerved it. In caſes of remarkable neglect, diſobedience or misbehaviour they were turned away. This, indeed, happened but ſeldom, for they were in general honeſt, ſober and induſtrious. They had the intereſt of their maſters at heart, nay, ſo remarkable were ſome of them in theſe times for fidelity, that (it is reported) they ſeemed to have as much or more pleaſure in doing their work, as in receiving their wages.

But

But it happened, ſome ages ago, that one of their princes was ſaved from a formidable conſpiracy againſt his life and crown, juſt upon the point of execution, by the fidelity and courage of a ſervant. The prince was a man of a warm heart, and an uncommonly generous diſpoſition. Not content with bountifully rewarding his benefactor by kindneſs to himſelf and family, he conceived a deſign of perpetuating the memory of the fact, and ſhewing his gratitude by doing ſomething in favour of the whole order or body of men. For this purpoſe, being poſſeſt of abſolute power, after conſulting upon it for ſome time, he eſtabliſhed the following regulations, not doubting that they would be highly beneficial to his ſubjects in general, as well as the ſervants in particular.

1. It was ordered that the wages of ſervants ſhould be conſiderably augmented, and fixed to a certain rate in all the king's dominions. This was evidently dictated by compaſſion. He obſerved that it was very hard and unequal, that thoſe who were conſtantly employed in labour, who promoted the intereſt of their maſters ſo much, ſhould notwithſtanding live ſo poorly; that they ſhould have nothing but the coarſeſt diet, and no more money than was barely neceſſary to purchaſe the meaneſt cloathing. He uſed, when the matter was under deliberation, to reaſon thus: 'For my part, I think a 'king ought to have the heart of a man; I conſi-'der the ſervants as my fellow creatures, and am

'deſirous

'desirous that they should taste some of those plea-
'sures and delicacies of life, which they contribute
'so largely to procure for the accommodation of
'others'.

He also observed that interest as well as compassion dictated the same thing; that keeping them poor would entirely dispirit them, and make them do their duty in the most careless and slothful manner, by which their masters must receive manifest prejudice. On the other hand, a good and secure provision would give them great vigour and alacrity. He ventured to foretel, that a third part increase of their salary would increase their work in a far greater proportion, so that the publick would be gainers by this seeming burden. Besides that such a fixed provision would free them from all temptation to pilfering and stealing, and so be an improvement upon their honesty as well as activity.

Another advantage he proposed to reap by this measure was, increasing the number of servants. It was well enough remembered that, at no very distant period, the kingdom had suffered not a little from the scarcity of servants; so that the land lay uncultivated, and many branches of business neglected. Now it was impossible to avoid seeing that this measure must increase the number of servants, by inducing them to come into the kingdom from the most distant places, as well as encouraging them to marry and propagate, and bless their country with a multitude of useful hands.

Nay, he even called in the aid of luxury to enforce his argument, alledging, that keeping the ſervants poor, muſt make them ſordid and naſty, ſo that it would be odious to people of taſte and elegance to have them about their perſons, or even to ſee them in their houſes. But by carrying the propoſed deſign into execution, he ſaid, he hoped to ſee the ſervants in general genteel, well dreſſed, well behaved, and converſible men. That this muſt be an advantage in particular to families in the country, who were conſiderably diſtant from one another, and, in certain ſeaſons of the year, could have very little intercourſe: nay even, that in cities and places of greater reſort, it would be better, in many reſpects, to have opportunities of converſation within doors, than to be always obliged to ſeek ſociety abroad.

In ſhort, he ſuppoſed that the regulation now eſtabliſhed would put an entire period to all the murmurings and complaints of ſervants, and their deſires of ſhifting from one family to another, which was a ſource of daily inconveniencies. They muſt be touched, ſays he, with a ſenſe of gratitude for ſo unexpected and ſo happy a change in their ſituation, and will therefore be thoroughly content and *never ask for more.*

2. Having the publick good all along at heart, as much as the advantage of the ſervants, he ordered ſchools and places of exerciſe to be built, and maſters appointed to train up ſervants and fit them for their

ſeveral

ſeveral truſts. There were different tracts of education chalked out for all different ſorts of employments. It was particularly expected of the directors of theſe academies, that they would ſelect the ſervants fit for every branch, and both educate and diſpoſe of them according as their genius ſhould intimate they were moſt capable. As for example, for cooks, waiting men, and other domeſtick ſervants, and grooms, gardiners, and labouring men of all ſorts without doors.

The advantage of this regulation, in both its parts, ſeemed very evident. Education, it was ſaid, is all in all. Education makes the man, and makes the ſervant. It will therefore prepare them for their work. They will enter upon it expert and proven, very much to the publick emolument; inſtead of being aukward and unhandy for ſome time, till experience has given them facility, or, perhaps, retaining ſome meaſure of ruſticity and inactivity through their whole lives.

It ſeemed alſo a matter of great moment, that no man ſhould be ſuffered to profeſs what he could not do, but that he ſhould be confined to that only which he could beſt do. Neither was it proper that this ſhould be left to the caprice of families, or the ambition and preſumption of the ſervants themſelves. And it was never once imagined the maſters of academies would be defective in *judgment* and *impartiality* on their part.

3. The third and laſt regulation he eſtabliſhed

was ordering the ſervants to be erected by charter into a large corporation, containing many ſmaller bodies and ſocieties within it. To this corporation he gave authority over the ſeveral members of which it was compoſed, and eſtabliſhed a complete ſubordination. This was thought a piece of admirable wiſdom and policy. They were to be ſtrictly watchful over one another, and it was ſuppoſed they would get all the advantage in this ſhape, which men united in ſociety have over thoſe in a ſtate of nature. The ſeveral claſſes and diviſions of the corporation were to try the ſufficiency of all ſervants before they were admitted, and had power to turn them off when they misbehaved or neglected their work. That this might proceed with the greater regularity, they were every one ſecured by law in their employments. They were not left in a vague dependent ſtate: a ſervant once hired by any family could not be turned away but by an order of his fellow-ſervants, to whom all complaints of his conduct were to be made, and by whom they were to be judged.

The whole was founded upon the moſt excellent reaſons. Who ſo proper to judge of the capacity and diligence of ſervants as thoſe who are ſervants themſelves? who can be ſuppoſed ſo attentive to their conduct, or ſo jealous of their behaviour, ſince the character of particulars muſt evidently reflect either diſgrace or credit on the whole collective body.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of the Effects produced by these Regulations.

AT first, and indeed for a considerable time after these regulations were established, experience seemed to confirm the wisdom as well as generosity of the prince, and to discover their happy consequences every day. Servants were trained up and instructed in every branch of business, and were very expert in their work. They understood the cause, the reason and the end of every thing, and could talk upon it in a most intelligent and consistent manner. They did every thing with much exactness, and had plainly a far greater air of neatness and elegance than formerly. The fields were dressed and trimmed to great perfection; the utensils of the houses were all brightned and put in order; the outsides of the houses and avenues to them were all adorned in a very pretty and fanciful manner. They were not content with what was barely profitable to their masters, but paid also a due regard to show and appearance. Persons who travelled were exceedingly delighted, and the proprietors were not a little proud of the change; for every house was like a little palace, and every country-seat like a little paradise. Thus far the servants seemed to be much upon their honour, and, from a sense of gratitude to the emperor, endeavoured to behave themselves with

with great care and diligence; ſo that every body, as well as themſelves, ſincerely rejoiced in the change of their ſtate.

But alas! how ſhort-ſighted are human creatures? this univerſal ſatisfaction did not laſt long. It was quickly ſeen, notwithſtanding ſo good a beginning, that the regulations laid down would but ill anſwer the end propoſed. The change to the worſe took its riſe from the enlargement of their wages, which yet ſeemed, at firſt, to be the chief and moſt reaſonable article of the regulations: for, after they had obtained good wages, and the beſt of food and accommodation, ſome of them began to grow fat, and conſequently lazy. When they were ſuddenly called, ſometimes by dozing and ſleeping they did not hear at all; and when they did hear were very ſlow in their motions, and always ready furniſhed with an excuſe for their neglect; or, perhaps, raiſed ſome very ſtrong objections to what they were deſired to do. When they were ſent of an errand, they took a long time before they returned; and yet would poſitively ſtand to it, that it was impoſſible to return ſooner. If this was not ſatisfying, they would, in a great rage, before they delivered their meſſage, return and meaſure the ground they had traverſed in order to determine the diſpute.

Having now more to eat and drink than formerly, they behoved to take more time to it; and ſo the hours of their work were very much diminiſhed. This ſeemed to them not only reaſonable but neceſſary;

neceſſary; and great diſputes aroſe upon it with the families in which they ſerved. The families in general gave them to underſtand, that they expected greater diligence and activity, as they were now better paid than before, whereas the ſervants counted that highly ridiculous; for with them it was a fixed point, that the more liberally they were paid, they ought to do the leſs for it. It is needleſs to inlarge upon this part of the ſubject; let it ſuffice to ſay, that, in general, having now got ſo good proviſion made for them, they began not to ſerve but to live. The delicacies of the world began to captivate their hearts, and inſtead of ſatisfying themſelves with neceſſaries, and being uſeful in their generation, they bethought themſelves of enjoying what had thus ſo luckily fallen to their ſhare.

Changes in all reſpects came on inſenſibly. It was before obſerved that one advantage propoſed by the regulations was the increaſe of the number of ſervants. This effect indeed did follow with a witneſs. Whereas before the country was not overſtocked with ſervants, and families were at great pains in looking out for proper ones, now they increaſed to an almoſt incredible number. Not only was there a great confluence of ſtrangers from diſtant places, but many of the inhabitants, not inconſiderable in point of ſtation found it their intereſt to become ſervants. Now you would every where ſee them going about and ſoliciting employment, and very wonderful were the arts they ſometimes uſed

to obtain it. Of theſe I ſhall ſay nothing in this preliminary part of the hiſtory, becauſe I ſhall probably have afterwards a better opportunity to introduce them.

As the ſtate of things and the way of thinking began to alter, the language and manner of ſpeaking altered alſo at the ſame time. In former times they uſed to ſpeak of getting a maſter, or being hired, or getting an employment, now they ſpake of getting into bread, of getting a ſalary, a ſettlement, or a living. I know nothing that reſembles this difference ſo much as the difference between our way of ſpeaking in Scotland, and what is uſual in our neighbour country of England about ſervants. Here we ſpeak of a ſervant's getting into ſervice; in England they call it getting a place, and a footman turned away, they term with the higheſt propriety a footman out of place.

Things having once come into this ſituation, it happened with theſe ſervants as it happens with all men when once they begin to gratify their deſires: they become inordinate, exceſſive and inſatiable. Inſtead of being content with what they had obtained, they began to fall upon all imaginable methods of increaſing their revenues. They contrived an infinite number of perquiſites beſides their ordinary wages. When a family had of their own free motion beſtowed any mark of favour upon a good ſervant, the thing was immediately ſpread abroad, and all other families were harraſſed with complaints,

and

and teazed to death by their ſervants till the ſame was beſtowed upon them. They would often, in a clandeſtine manner, lay hold of ſome of the goods of the family and appropriate them to their own uſe; and, when it came at laſt to be diſcovered, they would take the advantage of their own covetouſneſs, and prove clearly, that by immemorial cuſtom it belonged to them as their due. Where families were ignorant, they would affirm with the greateſt boldneſs, that ſuch and ſuch were the privileges of ſervants in all other places, and by that means procure their conſent. When they were not only ignorant but timid and cowardly, they would go a ſhort way to work, and threaten to burn their houſes to the ground if they did not comply with every demand.

But, what they excelled moſt in were the arts of flattery and deceit in rich families. Such as got near great men would ſtand as it were in perpetual admiration of the beauty of their perſons, the gracefulneſs of their manners, and the excellence of their underſtandings. The ſervants of ſome perſons of great rank had a cuſtom of making up a long liſt, every day, of the virtues which ſuch perſons had that day put in practice, and reading it over to them next morning before they got out of bed, which was obſerved to render them quite facile and tractable for a long time after.

They perſuaded the credulous, that the publick good was inſeparably connected with their thriving

and opulence. 'Induſtry,' ſaid they, 'is the ſource 'of wealth to a nation. Servants, every body muſt 'acknowledge, are the means of induſtry: thence 'it follows undeniably, that the more ſervants the 'better.' By the help of this argument they obtained, that many new eſtabliſhments were made for ſervants. And ſuch was the faſcination that prevailed, that frequently there were ſettlements made for the proviſion of menial ſervants in a wilderneſs, where there was hardly a ſingle creature to ſerve; and of husbandmen upon a ſea ſhore, where there was not an inch of ground to cultivate. They alſo got about ſick and dying perſons, and by their officious ſervices, by tending them with apparent care, and by frequently and readily giving them cordials, they prevailed, that many left great legacies to them in their wills.

CHAP. III.

Continues the ſame ſubject. And particularly gives an account of a very remarkable ſtep taken by the Servants.

WHEN their poſſeſſions, privileges and immunities were thus enlarged, they began to claim greater reſpect than formerly, and to aſſume additional titles and deſignations. Some of them would be no longer ſervants properly ſpeaking, but overſeers. They affirmed that it was eſſential to the nature

nature of ſervants that ſome of them ſhould be overſeers, and that there could be neither order nor œconomy in a family without ſome ſuch. To this they added ſuboverſeers, and ſeveral other officers for their aſſiſtance. They then proceeded to archoverſeers, who had all the other overſeers, as well as ſervants, under their juriſdiction. At a great meeting of the whole corporation, this was determined and decreed to be, and to have been, a part of the original inſtitution of ſervitude, without which it could not poſſibly ſubſiſt.

Theſe encroachments were very patiently ſubmitted to, and, one would think, had been carried as far as the nature of the thing would admit. Yet there remained one ſtep more which exceeded every thing that had been formerly ſeen, and happened as follows. An overſeer of the capital city gathered a great many of his cotemporaries about him, and after begging their moſt ſerious attention to a propoſal he had to lay before them, made a ſpeech to the following purpoſe. 'Honoured and 'very dear Brethren, You know that the life of ſo'ciety is order, and the ſoul of order is ſubordinati'on. The greateſt ſervice, therefore, that we can 'do to our corporation, is to keep up the ſubordi'nation of officers among us with as much ſtrictneſs, 'and to make it as compleat and extenſive as poſ'ſible. There are no ſtructures which ſtand ſo ſe'curely, as thoſe that are built in the form of a

'cone or a pyramid, becauſe they have a broad baſe, 'and gradually leſſen towards the top. Neither of 'theſe, however, is compleat, but maimed or im-'perfect, unleſs it be carried on till it terminate in 'a point. Therefore, the ſubordination of our ſo-'ciety can never be entire and perfect, till it end in 'a ſingle perſon, who may unite the whole, and 'enjoy abſolute uncontroulable dominion. And, as 'the perſon who is on the top of a pyramid muſt ne-'ceſſarily ſee farther than thoſe who ſtand upon any 'of the lower ſteps of it, ſo the perſon who is at the 'head of the whole ſociety of ſervants muſt, in 'virtue of his office, ſurpaſs them all in wiſdom and 'ſagacity. Nay, as this order is of the inſtitution 'of nature, and as a laſt reſort or ſupreme judge is 'neceſſary to determine controverſies in any ſociety, 'ſo I do think it may be proved that nature, to be 'uniform and conſiſtent in her operations, muſt im-'mediately inſpire the perſon ſo exalted with infal-'lible knowledge and a ſort of infinite mind. Now 'I hope it is very plain, that I myſelf am the per-'ſon to whom, and to my ſucceſſors in office, this 'power and authority do of right belong.'

One of the aſſembly then riſes up and ſays, 'I 'greatly ſuſpect this will be attended with no good 'effects upon the intereſt of the ſervants in general, 'not to mention the intereſt of the families, which, 'from a ſenſe of duty to the corporation, I intirely 'give up. At any rate, it ought not to be gone in-'to precipitately; for it is a prodigious innovation.'

'Quite

'Quite otherwiſe,' ſays the former ſpeaker; 'for 'tho' I have condeſcended to reaſon with you, and 'ſhow you that in the nature of things there muſt 'be one who, like the top ſtone of a pyramid, is in-'cumbent on the whole body; as alſo, that this can 'be no other than myſelf, who dwell in the centre 'of this vaſt empire; yet I can give undeniable evi-'dence that it hath been always ſo in fact, ſince 'there was an empire here, and ſince there were 'ſervants.' The objector then ſhook his head, as who ſhould ſay that is far from being a clear point, and ſeemed to wonder from whence this evidence was to proceed. The other immediately goes on, 'It is as clear as the ſun; for, 'tho' all the records 'that contained this regulation are loſt, yet I very 'well remember, that my nurſe told me before I 'was two years of age, that her grandmother's ſi-'ſter's couſin-german aſſured her it was fact.'

However unwilling, one would think, men ſhould be to give up their natural rights, and ſubmit to uſurped authority, yet ſo it was that they ſoon agreed to this ſcheme; and, indeed, it appeared to have been not ill projected for their own ends. It is not to be conceived at how ſpeedy a pace they advanced, in acquiring and extending their dominion. They quite inverted the uſe of language; for when they ſpoke of the family they always meant the ſervants; or, if they ſaid any thing would tend to the good of the family, it was to be underſtood, that it would promote the increaſe of the wages, privileges

leges and immunities of the ſervants. In many places the ſervants grew upon the families, and turned them out altogether. In ſome of the moſt delicious ſpots of the country, you would have ſeen fine ſeats and incloſures wholly poſſeſſed by ſervants, who abſolutely refuſed to do any work, but gave themſelves up to lazy contemplation. If any body had preſumed to aſk them the meaning of this, they ſaid they were employed in ſtudying the theory of ſervice, and wiſhing that all ſervants might be good, and all families well ſupplied.

It has been obſerved above, that they began their ſcheme by flattering the rich and great men, and endeavouring to inſinuate themſelves into their favour. But aſſoon as their power was ſufficiently eſtabliſhed, they changed their note, and treated the moſt conſiderable men of the country with great haughtineſs and contempt. They affirmed it to be abſolutely neceſſary for the publick good, that they ſhould have much honour and reſpect paid them. That, as they were undeniably the moſt uſeful rank of men, by conſequence they were the moſt honourable. Inſtead of being humble and ſubmiſſive, they inſiſted, that all the people, from the higheſt to the loweſt, ſhould pay a profound reſpect to the overſeers, archoverſeers, and other dignitaries, whoſe names I have forgot, becauſe they had neither ſenſe nor meaning. Nay, the emperor of the ſervants arrived in time at ſuch power, that he made the richeſt men in the country, even the governors

vernors of provinces to tremble. He ordered them ſometimes to wipe his ſhoes; and, when they miſbehaved or ſhewed the leaſt backwardneſs, commanded them to be whipt.

When my informer mentioned this circumſtance, I could not help diſcovering much amazement at the puſillanimity of theſe people, and even modeſtly hinted ſome ſuſpicion as to the truth of the fact. He inſiſted, however, in the moſt poſitive manner, on the truth of his account, and added, that he had many things ſtill more wonderful to communicate; as an inſtance of which he affirmed, that it was not only uſual for the emperor to order great men to be whipt, but even to command them to whip themſelves. All this they were obliged to ſubmit to, for he had the lower ſervants, and the whole kingdom abſolutely under his influence. If any perſon or family had diſputed his will in the leaſt article, they would either, without more ado, burn the houſe and them in it, or they would wholly give over work, and neither provide them with food nor fuel, ſo that they behoved immediately to ſtarve.

What contributed not a little to eſtabliſh this uſurpation, was a very ſingular ſcheme which they fell upon while they were flattering great men, and perſuading them to make new eſtabliſhments for ſervants. This was, that families ſhould not be permitted to chooſe ſervants for themſelves, but that a lord, or any other great man, ſhould have the power of nominating the ſervants within a certain di-

ſtrict.

ſtrict. They never failed to invent plauſible reaſons for all their ſchemes. In ſupport of this it was alleged, that families were often whimſical in their choice. That ſome would prefer a ſervant becauſe he was tall, and others becauſe he was ſhort; ſome becauſe his hair was red, others becauſe it was black. That they did not know when they were well ſerved, and when they were not. That they were apt to be impoſed on by ſuch as had ſmooth tongues and could flatter them. That, if families and ſervants were in a good underſtanding, they would raiſe ſedition and ſubvert the conſtitution.

On the other hand it was thought exceeding clear, that great men would underſtand the intereſt of the country, and the capacity of ſervants, much better than the vulgar. As alſo, that they were above all ſuſpicion of partiality, and would be ſure always to ſend fit and accompliſhed ſervants to every houſe. But alas, the contrary of all this was ſoon found by experience. They learned ſpeedily to ſell every place to the higheſt bidder, unleſs when they had a favourite or dependent to gratify, which indeed, at bottom, was the ſame thing. However, they were ſoon made dupes to the ſervants, for when the profit of this ſale was found out, the overſeers and archoverſeers gradually uſurped the nomination to themſelves, and at laſt, it came to be made an addition to the great and overgrown power of the emperor.

It may eaſily be ſuppoſed, things were now in a

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ſad ſituation, and they continued ſo, as tradition and written records aſſure us, for many ages. The lands lay uncultivated; the people were reduced to the greateſt miſery imaginable; they were ſorrily cloathed and worſe fed. No body proſpered but the ſervants, or rather, only the upper ranks of them, the noble and honourable ſervants, the overſeers and archoverſeers. To theſe indeed may be added the idle and ſpeculative ſort, who were ſettled in hives, in the moſt pleaſant and fruitful vallies, in every province. As for the poorer or loweſt claſs of ſervants, who actually did any work for the families, they were as much oppreſſed, by this time, as their maſters. Their wages were moſtly taken up by lazy overſeers, or exhauſted by heavy taxes which they were oblidged to pay to the emperor, and his court.

CHAP. IV.

A terrible Blow given to the Domination of the Servants; and particularly to the Power of the Emperor.

IT appears to be a fact, tho' not very well accounted for by philoſophers, that, when men have been long accuſtomed to ſlavery, they hug their chains, and become ſo blinded, as to pride themſelves in their miſery itſelf. A poor peaſant, in a neighbouring country, whoſe face is pale with

hunger, and his family ſcarce covered with rags, through the oppreſſion of his prince, yet will be very ready to venture his life in vindication of the tyrant's honour, and count himſelf extremely happy to lay it down in defence of his perſon. So it happened with the people under conſideration. They were ſo deluded by theſe ſervants, that, as their condition, ſo their reaſon itſelf was turned upſide down. They gloried in the uſurpation of the ſervants over them, worſhipped them often as they paſſed, and ſtoutly defended all their rights and privileges.

If by chance it happened, (as there were always ſome in every age) that one thought fit to complain of the ſloth, debauchery, avarice and tyranny of the ſervants, his brethren immediately raiſed a hideous accuſation againſt him, and the ſtupid people generally joined in the cry. They immediately aſſiſted his fellow-ſervants to ſeize him, to impriſon him, and, according to the degree of his offence, to puniſh him. They firſt, indeed, took the moſt charitable pains to convince him of his error. If, upon this, he was willing to recant, and ſolemnly to declare that the conduct of the ſervants was admirable, and the character of them all unblameable, he was diſmiſſed only with a good beating. But, if he was obſtinate, and inſiſted on telling the truth, he was carried to a dreadful ſubterraneous palace, and, there, put to the moſt horrid and ſhocking tortures, which at length ended in death.

How-

However, at laſt, this myſtery of iniquity got a terrible blow. One of the lower ſervants, of an honeſt heart, and a determined reſolute temper, being filled with indignation at the oppreſſion which the reſt were guilty of, ſet himſelf to open the eyes of the publick, and expoſe their wickedneſs. He made a full diſcovery of all the frauds he had any how been acquainted with, and ſpared not the corruption of the emperor's court. Laying down only this plain principle, that ſervants were obliged to promote, at all times, the real intereſt of their maſters, he ſet the abominable conduct of the covetous blood-ſuckers in the moſt odious light. Whenever he went to a fair, or other place of public concourſe, he would get upon an eminence, and, in a long diſcourſe, endeavour to rouſe the people from their lethargy, and inflame them with reſentment againſt their oppreſſors.

This furniſhed his brethren with an opportunity of repreſenting him as a diſturber of the peace, and loading him with innumerable calumnies. Many tumults were raiſed againſt him, and he was often in imminent danger of his life. When he had narrowly eſcaped being ſtoned in publick, they would often hire deſperadoes to aſſaſſinate him in private; and, ſometimes, attempted to bribe his intimate friends to take him off by poiſon. However, by a mixture of bravery and caution in himſelf, together with the aſſiſtance of ſome faithful friends, who ſaw how much he was promoting their intereſt, or ra-

ther, by a moſt ſingular providence, he was always brought off ſafe. At laſt, a few of the other ſervants joined him, and they together opened the eyes of ſeveral provinces of the empire. Theſe came to a formal reſolution of caſting off the yoke of the emperor, and ſettling the ſervants upon a quite new, or rather bringing them back to the old, reaſonable and natural foundation.

This was not brought about without a moſt violent and pertinacious oppoſition. The emperor immediately ſounded the alarm, and ſet the ſervants in motion throughout all his dominions. He could not be ſuppoſed, indeed, to look upon ſuch a ſcheme with indifference; for it plainly tended to ſtrip him of a great part of his revenue and power: nor was it eaſy to ſee where it would ſtop. He therefore cried out againſt it with all his might. He ſent out a proclamation, in which he affirmed, that it ſtruck againſt the very being of ſervants, and that the deſign was no leſs than to exterminate them from the face of the earth. He repreſented it as the moſt unnatural thing that ever was heard of. That there had been ſometimes conſpiracies of ſervants againſt their maſters, but a joint conſpiracy of maſters againſt their own ſervants, and of ſervants againſt their fellow-ſervants, was abſolutely without precedent. He concluded with a ſolemn execretion, devoting all who ſhould continue in this rebellion to compleat and irretrievable ruin.

The conſequence of this was a civil war in the kingdom.

kingdom. Many battles were fought, in which there was a dreadful ſlaughter on both ſides, and multitudes taken priſoners, who were none of them uſed very well. The emperor indeed, and his court had a manifeſt advantage, by long practice, in deviſing the moſt exquiſite methods of revenge and cruelty. But, to ſhorten my narrative, after many violent and and bloody diſputes, as well as uſeleſs conferences, at laſt ſome provinces agreed to keep the old way, and ſome eſtabliſhed the new. Particularly, in one Northern province there was, at the time of the change, a moſt excellent method and order eſtabliſhed with regard to the ſervants. They not only renounced the authority of the emperor; but all overſeers, archoverſeers, auditors, controllers, accountants, keepers of records and other unneceſſary officers were baniſhed at once: and none ſuffered to continue but uſeful working ſervants. The ſpeculative drones were expelled, and their lands given to perſons of rank and worth in the province. That regulation was aboliſhed, as extremely pernicious, which permitted lords or great men to name ſervants to others, ſo that every family choſe ſuch as beſt pleaſed themſelves, and ſuch as were well qualified for the buſineſs for which they were hired. The exorbitant increaſe of their wages was reduced, as well as all extravagant perquiſites, and only a moderate proviſion continued and ſettled.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Some account of the Reformed Eſtabliſhment, in a Northern Province; and the happy effects that followed upon it for a time. It begins however again to degenerate.

THE people of this province were now ſo fully convinced of the terrible conſequences of the late uſurpation, that they reſolved to uſe all poſſible precautions, to prevent the return of corruption for the future. In this the ſervants themſelves ſeemed to concur very heartily, and were, apparently, animated with a warm zeal againſt the worthleſs part of their own order. Many excellent rules were laid down in the meetings of the corporation. They were ordered under the ſevereſt penalties to apply themſelves diligently to their buſineſs; to live ſober, grave and mortified lives; to forbear all ranting, junketing and gaming. They were forbid all travelling abroad, or wandering from their families, but upon urgent occaſions, and with leave aſked and given. If any were convicted of diſhoneſty, lazineſs, or diſobedience, they were not only diſmiſſed, but ſtript of their clothes, branded in their foreheads, and declared utterly incapable of ever being again employed.

The greateſt ſtrictneſs imaginable was uſed in trying them, as to their ſufficiency in every branch of

of buſineſs for which they were hired; and very diligent enquiry made into their character for honeſty and ſincerity. When they were introduced to any family, they were taken ſolemnly bound by a tremendous oath, to have the good of the family always at heart, and that they ſhould never do any thing, directly or indirectly, that might tend to its prejudice. But above all, there was a ſtrict law made, and declared to be unalterable, that no ſervant ſhould be forced upon any family againſt their will. In order to ſecure, in the moſt effectual manner, the execution of theſe laws, it was reſolved, that, in the government of the corporation, there ſhould be joined with the ſervants certain perſons of the moſt prudent ſort from the families. Theſe were called helpers, they had no ſallaries, but being naturally a ſort of repreſentatives of the people, it was expected they would univerſally ſupport their intereſt.

For a long time this province was exceeding happy in their reformed conſtitution. The moſt perfect harmony ſubſiſted between maſters and ſervants. The work of the ſervants ſeemed to be a pleaſure to them, and, on the other hand, the members of every family ſeemed to vie with one another who ſhould treat their ſervants with the greateſt tenderneſs and humanity. Once or twice there was an attempt made to introduce overſeers and archoverſeers among them, from a neighbouring province which had retained theſe officers, tho' they would

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not ſuffer them to be ſubject to the emperor. However, the people ſhowing a proper ſpirit, they were ſtill thrown out. All this time matters went on exceeding well, the fields were aſſiduouſly cultivated, and brought every year immenſe crops; and plenty as well as well as harmony was every where to be ſeen.

But alas, after a long ſeaſon of peace and quiet, things began to alter for the worſe. Ambition, avarice and luxury, would not be kept out by the baniſhment of the old titles. They found a way of introducing themſelves, under cover of the form that then prevailed, without any apparent change. The moſt important ſtep towards bringing this about, was re-eſtabliſhing the law which impowered great men to nominate ſervants to inferior families. This was ſubmitted to the more eaſily, becauſe they only nominated them to the ſalary, provided that the corporation ſhould think proper to introduce them to the family. For this purpoſe, the moſt ſacred laws required an invitation from the family itſelf. But the young ſervants ſoon began to find, that it was far eaſier for many of them to play the paraſite or ſycophant about great mens houſes, that they might procure a writ of nomination, than to acquire a good reputation for diligence in their work. That was the road, therefore, in which the greateſt part of them travelled to preferment.

Many and fierce were the ſtruggles, for ſeveral years, in the meetings of the corporation about introducing

troducing ſervants to families. As all the laws required an invitation from the family, when any perſon was nominated, a neighbouring court would ſend a deputation to the family, to aſk them whether they would take ſuch a one for their ſervant or not. Sometimes they wheedled and flattered, and ſometimes threatened them, if they would not comply. If any conſented, their names were ſet down three or four times, to ſwell the number; if any were angry and ſpoke impertinently, they were ſuppoſed to be out of their ſenſes, and incapable of judging. After theſe arts were uſed they would ſit down gravely to determine the matter, and FIND, that there was in this inſtance a moſt agreeable and harmonious invitation.

It is impoſſible to help ſmiling, when one reflects upon the various methods uſed in conducting this buſineſs. Sometimes they could not get a ſingle perſon in a houſe to accept of the ſervant who had been nominated. When this happened, they uſed to ſend for all the relations of the family, even the moſt diſtant couſins, and aſk their conſent, which was eaſily obtained, becauſe it was nothing to them whether the family were well ſerved or ill. When they had obtained it, if a complaint was made, they endeavoured to prove by very ingenious reaſonings that theſe diſtant relations had as good a title to invite a ſervant as any perſon whatever. Matters however drove on very heavily for a while; but in order to facilitate them, many gentlemen of eſtates,

who knew not much either about ſervice or ſervants, procured themſelves to be choſen to the office of helpers. Not that they helped to do any thing; but, getting in to be members of the courts of the corporation, they contributed to provide ſervants in places. By this means many were provided with a piece of bread, who had been poor ſneaking fellows, and had followed them in their youth, in hunting, fiſhing, and other diverſions.

Such was the ſituation of affairs when my informer went into the country, and, as the caſe was very ſingular, the reader may eaſily gueſs how much it engaged his attention. He reſided chiefly in this Northern province, and, therefore, his remarks were moſtly confined to what happened among them. It would be endleſs to mention all that he told me, but the principal obſervations ſhall be communicated to the world in the following chapters.

CHAP. VI.

Of the great impropriety often ſeen in the appointment of ſervants; and the ſentiments of the inhabitants on that ſubject.

THERE is commonly, in every ſociety, ſome radical principle which governs and modifies the reſt, and gives a tincture to all the meaſures that are carried on, whatever be their particular ſubject, or ſeeming intention. In the caſe before us,

us, the fundamental error appears to have been the power of nomination which was given to great men. The conſequence of this was, an exceſſive impropriety in the appointment of ſervants to different families. If a poor ordinary family wanted a houſhold ſervant, ſometimes a lord would ſend them a foreign cook out of his own kitchen. This fellow would ſpeak ſuch minced broken language, that they could not underſtand him; and the meat he dreſſed for them they could not endure to look upon. When they deſired him to provide plain ſolid food, ſuch as they had been in uſe to eat, and in ſufficient quantity to fill their bellies, he would ſerve them up a courſe of flimſy diſhes, finely garniſhed, but entirely diſguiſed, ſo that the poor people could not imagine what they contained. If at any time they made complaint of this, he triumphed over their clowniſh ignorance and unrefined taſte, and would offer to prove, to the ſatisfaction of all men of ſenſe, that he perfectly underſtood his art.

In innumerable ſuch inſtances they went intirely in the face of common ſenſe, in the choice and appointment of ſervants. Sometimes, if a family wanted a plowman or a gardiner, they would ſend them a huntſman, or a running footman. If a conſiderable merchant wanted a book-keeper, they would ſend him a ſtupid ignorant fellow who could neither write nor read. For this prepoſterous conduct there was no remedy. The great men counted the right of

nomination as a precious jewel, which no conſideration could induce them to part with. And as the power of determination, in all diſputed caſes, lay in courts compoſed of ſervants, they ſtrenuouſly ſupported the moſt unreaſonable appointments. This was naturally to be expected, becauſe a contrary conduct would have been a ſilent impeachment of many of themſelves, as unfit for their preſent ſtations.

Beſides, it happened in this caſe, as I obſerved had happened in a former age, many loved to have it ſo. The people of better rank, and thoſe who would be thought to be of better rank, by an unaccountable faſcination, not only approved but admired theſe meaſures. To allow families, they ſaid, to chooſe ſervants for themſelves, would be a ſource of endleſs confuſion, but that the preſent was plainly a ſimple, rational, uniform and peaceable method of proceeding. It was a common and faſhionable topick of converſation to deſpiſe the folly and impudence of the common people, who had always a ſtrong inclination to chooſe their own ſervants, and looked with a very evil eye upon thoſe who were thus billeted upon them againſt their wills. If any perſon, in a company, had but ſignified that he thought this conduct inconſiſtent with equity or good policy, he was not thought fit to be reaſoned with, but a great and loud laugh was immediately raiſed againſt him, ſo that he was not only put to ſilence, but to confuſion. Nay, there were

not

not wanting many who affirmed, that no body could be ſincerely of that opinion, but that it was only pretended, from baſe and ſiniſter views.

I muſt obſerve here, that when my informer was on this part of the ſubject, which indeed he often reſumed, as what had made a great impreſſion upon his own mind, I could not help again diſcovering marks of aſtoniſhment. I told him, I very well knew the abſurdities of which the human mind is capable, yet this ſeemed to be the moſt incredible of any thing that I had ever read or heard of; that it ſhould be laughed down as a ridiculous notion, that families ought to be at liberty to chooſe their own ſervants. On this he was not a little offended, and ſpeaking with ſome acrimony, ſays, 'It 'was to gratify your curioſity, ſir, that, in this and 'former converſations, I have given an account of 'my obſervations in foreign countries. If you de-'ſire to hear no more, I ſhall be wholly ſilent; but 'give me leave to ſay, that the treatment which 'we travellers meet with when we return home, is 'at once unreaſonable and ungrateful. If we tell 'you things that are common, you look upon them 'as inſipid and trifling; and, if we tell you things 'that are quite new and ſurpriſing, you let us 'know, with great good manners, that you do not 'believe us.'

Then after a little pauſe, 'pray ſir,' ſays he, 'how many nations are there in Europe, Aſia or A-'frica, who think themſelves at liberty to chooſe

'their

'their own prince, or to bring him to an account 'for oppreſſion or bad government.' Truly, ſaid I, I believe not above five or ſix. 'Well then,' ſays he, 'If, perhaps, fifty to one of mankind have 'thought it a ſin or folly for them to chooſe their 'own maſters, is it modeſt in you to ſuſpect my vera-'city, when I tell you of one nation, where it be-'came faſhionable to think that they ought not to 'chuſe their own ſervants.'

'But, to come a little cloſer to the point,' ſays he, 'are you not a member of the ſelect ſociety in E——h?" I am, and glory in it as a moſt honour-able diſtinction. 'Have you not taken agriculture 'under your patronage?" Undoubtedly; and by what means can we better promote the intereſt of the public? 'By none, I admit. But ſuffer me to 'proceed with my interrogatories. Have you 'bought any land with the profits of your improve-'ments?" Not yet. They are but in their infancy, and have coſt me a great deal of expence. 'Are 'the crops of improvers generally better than thoſe 'of other people?" I cannot ſay they are. 'You 'ought," ſays he, 'to have confeſſed that they are 'commonly worſe; for, according to my obſerva-'tion, the mark of an improver is not to have a 'good crop, but to be able to give a rational and 'philoſophical account how he came to have a bad 'one. But have you not alſo encouraged a man to 'write books and read lectures upon agriculture, 'who made himſelf a beggar by putting it in prac-'tice?"

'tice?' Perhaps it may be ſo, but he underſtood the theory. 'How came you to believe that he 'underſtood the theory? Alas! alas! ſir, abſurdities 'coming into faſhion is not ſo rare a thing at home, 'as to entitle you to doubt the truth of my narra-'tive, when I told you of the miſtakes and deluſion 'of a certain people abroad.'

I confeſs I was never more nettled at any thing, than at this unexpected attack upon the laudable attempts among us, of late, to improve our native country. To compare them with the monſtrous conduct of the unpoliſhed American people deſcribed in this book, was unſufferable. I could not, therefore, let the matter drop, but told him, all that you have ſaid, ſir, might eaſily be anſwered; however, not to ſpend time upon it at preſent, what do you think of, or what have you to ſay againſt the excellent and rational tracts which have been publiſhed by private gentlemen of fortune among us, upon agriculture? Do they not contain the cleareſt arithmetical calculations, of the profit to ariſe from the method laid down? 'I ſay,' anſwered he, 'they 'are all what the lawyers call *felo de ſe*, and totally 'inadmiſſible.' Your reaſon, pray. 'My reaſon! 'why, truly, I have more reaſons than one. In the 'firſt place, they always put me in mind of a quack 'doctor with his *catholicon*. They have but one re-'medy for all diſeaſes. A gentleman happens to be 'ſtruck with ſome new theoretical principle, and im-'mediately falls to work, runs down every thing

'elſe.

'elſe, and applies this wonderful diſcovery to all 'purpoſes, all ſoils, and all ſeaſons, You know what 'enthuſiaſts the horſe hoers and pulveriſers are. 'Many of them are clearly of opinion, that dung is 'prejudicial to ground, as ſerving only to engender 'weeds. I was once quite of this opinion myſelf, 'and found no other difficulty in it, than how gentle-'men and farmers would get quit of their dung, 'which, not being returned to the ground in the 'way of manure, muſt ſoon grow up to an enor-'mous, and at the ſame time, moſt nauſeous and of-'fenſive heap. When under theſe apprehenſions, I 'remember to have projected a ſcheme to be car-'ried on by ſubſcription, which would have proved 'an effectual remedy. The method was, to have 'plans taken of every county, in which the level 'ſhould be marked, then canals to be carried thro' 'all the low grounds, and ſmaller ducts drawn from 'every gentleman and farmer's houſe, terminating in 'theſe canals, which, by the help of a collection of 'rain water at every houſe, would, at certain ſeaſons 'of the year, carry away the whole dung, and at laſt 'empty it into the ſea. The expence of this ſcheme 'would, indeed, have been very conſiderable; but 'the great advantages to be reaped from it, I appre-'hended, would ſoon convince every body of its uti-'lity. Now, however ridiculous ſuch a ſcheme may 'be, I am fully convinced it would have been put in 'practice in a certain county, if it had not been for 'the incorrigible obſtinacy of the common people.

'I am

'I am alſo of opinion, that it would have ſucceed-
'ed, and that dung would have been wholly baniſh-
'ed in a ſhort time. This would have happened,
'not only by the help of the canals, but the crops
'would have been ſo thin and ſpiritual, that the
'cattle who fed upon them would have paſſed very
'little of a groſs or excremental nature.

'I ſhall not trouble you, continued he, at this
'time, with any more of my reaſons but one. It
'ſeems highly incredible that, if the new ſchemes
'of agriculture were ſo profitable as their authors
'give out, they would be ſo generous as to diſcover
'them gratis to the publick, and even preſs the ſaid
'publick to accept of them. It is more probable
'they would keep them as a ſecret in their own fa-
'milies, till their excellence were diſcovered by
'their viſible effects. I know a manufacturing town,
'where, if any man falls upon a method of working,
'or a fabrick of goods, that is likely to bring a good
'profit, he is ſo far from preſſing it upon his neigh-
'bours, that he uſes every poſſible precaution to
'keep it to himſelf. On the other hand, his neigh-
'bours are as inquiſitive as he is ſecret; and com-
'monly both diſcover and imitate it in a very little
'time. There is a diſpoſition in mankind to reſiſt
'what is forced upon them, and to leave no method
'uneſſayed to come at what is induſtriouſly placed
'out of their reach.

'I would, therefore, humbly recommend it to all
'improvers, to give over talking upon the ſubject,

'and to fall heartily about putting their rules in 'practice; and, I can promiſe them, that, if they 'be ſucceſsful, it will not be long before they will 'be quite common. Or, let every perſon who diſ-'covers a noſtrum in agriculture, apply to the go-'vernment for a patent that no body may be ſuffer-'ed to uſe it except himſelf, and thoſe who ſhall pay 'him ſufficiently for the ingenuity of his invention. 'I can aſſure you, ſir, that if I had ſaid to the peo-'ple whom I left a few years ago, that I knew a 'nation, where it was common for benevolent per-'ſons to point out to them plain, eaſy, cheap and 'certain methods of growing rich, but they would 'not be perſuaded to uſe them, I would have had 'the ſame compliment paid me, which you were 'pleaſed to pay me ſome time ago, that I was tak-'ing the privilege of a traveller.'

I ſhall not trouble the reader with ſaying how far I was convinced by this reaſoning, only it made me reſolve to be entirely ſilent, as to any further particulars I ſhould learn concerning the corporation of ſervants, how ſtrange and unaccountable ſoever they might be. Having, therefore, brought this unavoidable digreſſion to a cloſe, we proceed with the hiſtory.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Great partiality in the trial of Servants, and uncertainty in the characters given of them.

IF the reader recollects what was ſaid in the preceding chapter, it is probable he will be ſurpriſed, that the corporation, with the powers given them, did not, for their own credit, look better into the qualifications of ſervants. Since it was in their power to licenſe them or not, it may be ſuppoſed they would take effectual care, that no inſufficient perſon ſhould be admitted. But it is to be obſerved, that ſo ſoon as the method of fixing ſervants, upon the nomination of lords or great men, came to be again in uſe, the trial of their ſufficiency turned to a mere farce. There might be ſome degree of integrity found in one court; but, in ſuch a caſe, the candidate had nothing to do but apply to another, where he would find, perhaps, a ſet of raſcally fellows who were aſhamed of nothing. To what a degree of boldneſs they ventured to proceed, may be ſeen from the following account of what literally happened.

A certain court was going upon the examination of a young man, who deſired to have a certificate that he was fully accompliſhed as a ſervant, and particularly well ſkilled in the cultivation of land. A grave and antient member aſked him, Pray, ſir, what is

the beſt way of plowing hard ſtiff land? *Anſ.* By running a wheel-barrow over it. The examinator was highly offended with the abſurdity of the anſwer, and ſhewed plainly in his countenance a mixture of ſurprize and indignation. But another member of court, being of a meek and gentle temper, and a great enemy to ſeverity, thought proper to interpoſe. He ſays to his brother, My dear ſir, the young man is modeſt and baſhful, which in itſelf is a moſt amiable diſpoſition, tho' it hinders him from anſwering ſo diſtinctly, as were to be wiſhed. Then, turning to the candidate, he ſays, I dare ſay, ſir, you know well enough that a wheel-barrow cannot plow land, becauſe it will not enter into the ſoil, nor open it ſufficiently. Muſt not hard ſtiff land be broken and pulveriſed, in order to make it fruitful? *Anſ.* Yes, ſir.

Then the firſt reſumed his examination. Now, pray ſir, Can you tell me how deep land ought to be plowed when it is well done? He, tho' quite ignorant of the ſubject, being naturally a man of mettle and acuteneſs, imagined, from what he had heard, that the deeper the better, and immediately anſwered, ſix yards. On this his examinator fell into a violent paſſion, and ſaid, How have you the impudence, ſir, to aſk us to inſtal you as a plowman, when you know nothing of the matter? Was there ever ſuch a thing heard or ſeen, ſince the beginning of the world, as plowing land ſix yards deep? or what conception could you have, in your own mind,

of

of the poſſibility of the thing? You ought to have a ſentence paſſed againſt you, wholly incapacitating you for any place in this country.

The noble and generous ſpirit of the candidate was roufed by this ſevere treatment, ſo, he replied; Pray ſir, do you imagine that, in this improved age, the ſervants of the eſtabliſhed corporation are brought up to a thorough knowledge of the ſeveral branches of buſineſs, for which the ſalaries are appointed? For my own particular, you ought not to be ſurprized that I could not tell you how land ſhould be plowed, for I never ſaw a plough in my life. How, when, where and by whom were you educated then? ſays the other in amaze. *Anſ.* I ſerved an apprenticeſhip in a toy ſhop. Very well, ſays the examinator, bleſſed, precious, happy, improved times! I have no more to add, I give up the examination to any body that pleaſes.

When this diſcontented zealot had dropt the diſcourſe, ſome other moderate men aſked him a few polite and faſhionable queſtions, ſuch as, what is the genteeleſt lining for a red coat? in what manner ſhould you preſent a glaſs of wine to a lord, and how to a farmer? whether is hunting or fiſhing the pleaſanteſt diverſion? whether ſhould the ſervants or the children of a family have the beſt lodging, diet, &c.? after a few minutes had been ſpent in this manner, it was carried by a great majority that he had anſwered extremely well, and was, in every reſpect, a moſt accompliſhed ſervant.

It was uſual for the ſervants to carry certificates with them, from the inferior courts of the corporation, wherever they went; but if any man had truſted to theſe certificates, he would have found himſelf miſerably miſtaken. They had taken up a principle, that a man might atteſt any thing to be true, which he did not know to be falſe. On this principle, for a proper conſideration, a vagrant fellow, of whom they knew little or nothing, would eaſily obtain a certificate, declaring him to be a compleat ſervant for every branch of buſineſs, and in particular, an admirable cook, gardiner, or whatever elſe he himſelf deſired to be ſpecified. If, upon trial, he was found totally deficient in any of the branches mentioned, and complaint was made to the court who certified for him, they thought they were fully excuſed if they could ſay that, upon their honour, they knew nothing about him, and were wholly ignorant whether he was a good ſervant or a bad. On all ſuch occaſions they uſed to launch out in praiſe of charity, and alledge, that every man had a right to another's good word, as far as it would go, unleſs he had forfeited it by ſome particular and known miſdemeanor,

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

Servants of different characters. A sketch of the good and bad. The inveterate hatred of the bad againſt the good.

HOwever general the corruption was, the reader is not to imagine that all ſervants were of the ſame character, or behaved in the ſame manner. There were ſtill ſome, here and there, who acted in a manner ſuitable to their ſtation, who minded their buſineſs, who loved their maſters, and were beloved by them. Theſe made as great a ſtruggle as they could to keep matters right in the meetings of the corporation, tho', commonly, with very indifferent ſucceſs. The oppoſite principles and conduct of the two ſorts may be learned from the following particulars.

They differed, *toto cælo*, in their very profeſſion and manner of ſpeaking. The modern faſhionable party affirmed, that courage and ſelf-ſufficiency ought to be the leading character of a ſervant. That he ought always to be ſpeaking in praiſe of his own deeds. That he ought never to allow of any error or miſtake in his behaviour; but, on the contrary, to inſiſt that he deſerved the higheſt approbation. Who is obliged, ſaid they, to ſpeak well of a man who ſpeaks ill of himſelf? can there be any thing more puſilanimous, than for a ſervant to be always con-

confeſſing that he can do very little to any purpoſe.

On the other hand, the honeſter ſort of ſervants declared, that they thought pride and confidence were in themſelves hateful, and quite intolerable in ſervants. That they ſhould not make high pretenſions, leſt they ſhould be brought but to the greater ſhame; that they ſhould acknowledge the great imperfection of every thing they did, and expect to be rewarded, not for the worth or value of their ſervice, but from the goodneſs and indulgence of their maſters.

It was curious to obſerve the different effects of theſe principles. Thoſe who ſpoke in the higheſt terms of their own qualifications, were always the moſt negligent and the moſt unfaithful. They grudged every thing they did, and laid hold of innumerable pretences for ſhortening their hours of labour, and procuring days of relaxation. If, at any time, one of them had done a piece of work in a tolerable manner, he could hardly be brought to do any more for two days; but was wholly taken up in admiring his own ingenuity, and commending it to all who would take the pains to liſten to him. On the contrary, the humble and ſelf-denied were always buſy, applied themſelves to their duty with the utmoſt care and aſſiduity, and thought they could never do enough. They never once called in queſtion the hours of labour, but conſidered the neceſſity of the family, or the importance of the work they were engaged in. When any body happened to

commend

commend one of them for his diligence, he intreated them to forbear ſuch diſcourſe, for he was very ſenſible he had not done the thouſandth part of what he ought to have done.

Men came to be ſo ſenſible of the different effects of theſe principles, that almoſt every family earneſtly wiſhed to have ſervants of the ſelf-denying character, and perfectly hated the other. If they entered into converſation with an unknown ſervant, they were particularly attentive to the ſtrain of his diſcourſe, and, though he were upon his guard, would with great ſagacity penetrate his ſentiments. But, alas! this ſerved very little purpoſe; for, if he had intereſt to procure a writ of nomination, they were obliged to receive him, and then being fixed in the ſaddle, he made a full diſcovery both of his principles and practice.

Nothing was more remarkable than the rancorous hatred which the ſelf-ſufficient bore to the humble ſervants; eſpecially ſuch as ſhowed the moſt remarkable diligence in their work. They ſpread ſlanders againſt them without number. They uſed to go about with indefatigable diligence, among the great men, and nominators to the eſtabliſhed ſalaries, to exaſperate their minds againſt them, and prevent their ſettlement or promotion. They repreſented them as a ſet of poor, ſilly, ſneaking, ſpiritleſs fellows, who, for no other end than to throw an odium on the more free and generous livers, would work longer than uſual. For the ſame

reaſon; it was pretended, that, when the reſt were at their paſtime, running, jumping, or cudgel playing, then to be ſure, theſe hypocrites would be driving a ſtake, or pruning a tree about a farm, or picking weeds from a garden or field of corn. They repreſented them, alſo, (which was indeed partly true,) as acquiring a ſtiff ruſtick air, by often ſtooping, and habitual application to their work.

Neither were they wanting in executing their revenge againſt their enemies themſelves, whenever an opportunity offered. If two or three of the looſer ſort met, by chance, one of the induſtrious in a ſolitary place, or going of an errand, they cunningly ſolicited him to join with them in ſome diverſion, for example, blind-man's-buff, or any other. If he complied, they all confpired againſt him, and drubbed him heartily; and, after they had done ſo, one was immediately diſpatched to inform againſt him, and let the family he belonged to know how he had been ſpending his time, ſo that he was no better than his neighbours. Whenever they diſcovered a ſervant in a field after the uſual time of labour, they would get behind the hedges and pelt him unmercifully with ſtones, ſo that he returned home, not only fatigued with his work, but ſeverely ſmarting with the wounds he had received.

Such was not only the conduct of individuals, but the very ſame ſpirit prevailed in the meetings of the corporation, from the loweſt to the higheſt. None met with ſo ſevere treatment from them as

honeſt

honeſt induſtrious ſervants, who were beloved in the families where they were placed; neither was there any crime ſo heinous as being more diligent than the generality of other ſervants. If any family accuſed a ſervant of pilfering, negligence, drunkenneſs, or wantonneſs among the maids, theſe were all human infirmities, no way atrocious in their nature. They were alſo hard to be aſcertained; ſo that it was almoſt impoſſible to bring a proof of the facts to the ſatisfaction of the court. But, if one happened to be accuſed of doing any uncommon ſervice to the family at their deſire, or working when others were allowed to play, this was high treaſon againſt the conſtitution; and he was condemned without mercy, and ſometimes without hearing.

But, of all the crimes of this ſort, the moſt unpardonable was whatever tended to impeach the wiſdom, or weaken the authority of the annual meetings of the corporation. When an inferior court was ordered to introduce a ſervant into a family who had refuſed to receive him, ſometimes a member or two would humbly repreſent, that the terms of the oath appeared to them abſurd and prophane, in that inſtance, and beg to be excuſed. Whenever this happened, they were dragged as delinquents to the bar, rated and abuſed, ſtript and branded, declared infamous, and incapable even of repentance. It was many times affirmed in the general meeting, that no man could be guilty of a crime which, ſo much as, approached in guilt to

that of diſparaging the authority of the corporation of ſervants.

I muſt take this opportunity of acquainting the reader with a ſtory that happened a few years before my informer left the country. One of the ſervants, who was a great oppoſer of the prevailing meaſures, finding his brethren to be deaf to ſerious reaſoning, fell upon a ſingular device. Being poſſeſt of a vein of humour, and knowing a little of the art of painting, he drew a picture of the droll or ludicrous kind, in which, by ænigmatical characters, he repreſented the various impoſitions of the ſervants in general. He alſo took off the likeneſſes of the principal and moſt active leaders of the corporation, and put them in the moſt comical poſtures imaginable. Here was to be ſeen a fellow capering and dancing in a garden all full of weeds, and his inſtruments lying beſide him, quite grown over with ruſt -----Another carrying a baſket over his arm, with the ſign of a pine apple in his hand, and a paſſenger, on examining the contents, finds nothing but ſtinking fiſh, and ſtops his noſe-----A great bloated fellow, ſwelled like a tun, challenging the whole country to run a race with him-----Another hurrying away a girl into a corner, and covering her with his frock.-----Theſe, and many others, he drew in ſuch a manner, as clearly to expoſe their knavery and oſtentation.

This picture was ſtuck up, in the night-time, near a publick road leading to a great town. As the

the perſons were all very well known, it is not to be imagined what entertainment it afforded to the people. No body could look upon it without laughing: and, when ever any of the ſervants, honoured with a place in it, were ſeen upon the ſtreets, the boys gathered about them in crowds, and, to their unſpeakable mortification, mimicked the poſtures in which they had been repreſented. Copies in miniature were taken of this performance, and kept in many families; ſo that, whenever the ſervants were in ill humour, they would pull out the draught, and hold it in their eye.

The fury and reſentment of the ſervants, on the publication of this piece, is not to be conceived. The author had done it with ſo much caution and ſecrecy, that they could not get him legally convicted. However, they either diſcovered, or at leaſt thought they had diſcovered who he was, and employed themſelves night and day, in deviſing methods of revenge. Above all, that unlucky fellow, who had been repreſented following the girl, was ſo tranſported with rage, that he ſcarce ever returned to his right ſenſes. He had been ſomething of a draughtſman himſelf, ſo he ſet about making a picture in ridicule of the induſtrious ſervants; but, either the thing itſelf was ſo difficult, or he proceeded with ſo much rage and trepidation, that it was a perfect caricatura, and his friends prevailed with him to ſuppreſs it.

The poor author, in the mean time, was obliged

to be conſtantly upon his guard, as there was always a ſet of deſperadoes lying in wait for him, armed with clubs, and fully determined to beat his brains out, if they could catch him in a proper place. In the mean time, they all agreed in telling lies upon him without ceaſing. They affirmed, that no body but a compleat raſcal could be capable of ſuch a performance; that to betray ſervants to their maſters was, at any rate, a malicious trick; but, that for a ſervant to laugh at his fellow ſervants, and ſet other people a laughing at them too, was the cleareſt demonſtration of a depraved heart. It was ten years after the fact was committed, that my informer left the country; and he declared that their reſentment had not abated in the leaſt degre: a circumſtance which, I obſerved, had made a deep impreſſion upon his mind; ſo that he would often ſay, From the fury of an enraged ſervant, good Lord deliver me. He alſo told me, that he was convinced by this example, that wit and humour was a talent unſpeakably prejudicial to the poſſeſſor; and therefore, if ever he had a child, and obſerved in him the leaſt turn that way, he would apply himſelf with the utmoſt aſſiduity to eradicate it as a vice.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

The careleſſneſs of Servants in their work. A curious debate in a certain family, which iſſued in nothing.

IT will be eaſily perceived, from what has been ſaid above, that the greateſt part the ſervants were exceſſively negligent. They ſeemed to have two great objects conſtantly in view, and to carry them on hand in hand; the increaſe of their wages, and the diminution of their labour. The truth is, however ſtrange it may ſeem, theſe always bore an exact proportion to one another. Whenever a ſervant got more wages ſettled upon him, he looked upon it as a conſequence, that he ſhould be more ſlothful than before. In the mean time, it was remarkable what ingenious and plauſible reaſonings they always fell upon to juſtify their conduct. On this ſubject particularly they would ſay, What is well done is ſoon done. A ſmall piece of work, executed as it ought to be, is better than marring a great deal, which is worſe than idleneſs.

Inſtead of any other general remarks, I ſhall entertain the reader with a curious example of their ingenuity, in deviſing excuſes for their own neglect. This happened in the family of a great man, about three years after the publication of the enigmatical picture, and plainly ſhowed that, tho' the reproof had

had enraged them, it had contributed nothing to reform them. One morning, almoſt the whole ſervants of this family were gathered together in a large hall, to conſider what work it would be proper for them to fall about that day. A ſervant who, indeed, was not very well looked upon, as inclining a little to the ſober induſtrious kind, complained, that there had been for a long time an intolerable negligence in keeping the fences, and excluding ſtraying or ſtrange cattle from their maſters grounds. He therefore propoſed, that they ſhould immediately go in a body, drive out all the ſtrange cattle, without exception, that were in the incloſures, and mend up the fences, which were now in ſo ſorry a condition. He told them, that there were many ſtrange cattle paſturing where they ought not to be; particularly, that he himſelf, not an hour before, had ſeen a large bull, with a thick neck, and dull heavy eyes, but *broad ſhoulders, firm joints, and a lank belly*, which made him fit for jumping. On this a diſpute aroſe, of which the reader may take the following juſt and faithful account.

One obſerved, that he could not agree to the motion, which proceeded from a perſon no way remarkable for a good temper. 'If our brother would 'look a little more at home, ſays he, perhaps he 'would find leſs reaſon for theſe ſnarling complaints 'of the negligence of others. The propoſal is un-'kind and unbenevolent. There ſhould be great

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'forbearance uſed in every family toward their 'neighbours. No doubt there have been, and 'there will be, treſpaſſes upon both ſides; and there-'fore, I am humbly of opinion, that no notice ſhould 'be taken of it at all.'

A ſecond then riſes up, and ſpeaks to the follow-ing effect. 'If I thought that any good would fol-'low upon what is now propoſed, I ſhould readily 'agree to it. I am perhaps as much attached to my 'maſter's intereſt as the perſon who made this mo-'tion, notwithſtanding all his fine profeſſions; but 'I am perſuaded it would be altogether in vain. 'There is a ſtrange diſpoſition, in beaſts of all 'kinds, to break into thoſe places from which there 'is any attempt to keep them out; it would there-'fore only increaſe the evil it pretends to remedy. 'All perſecution, we know, helps the cauſe of the 'perſecuted; ſo that, ſuppoſing one has made an 'encroachment at this time, if he were driven out, 'we may depend upon it, he would immediately re-'turn with twenty more at his heels.'

A third made a very ſage and learned obſervati-on. 'Take notice, ſays he, what you are about to 'do. There is more difficulty in it than you ap-'prehend. Is there not a very great ſimilarity in 'colour, ſhape and ſize, between our maſter's cattle 'and his neighbours? It would oblige us to a very 'ſtrict and particular examination before we could 'determine the point. This would create ſuch 'difference of opinion, ſuch zeal and keenneſs in e-

'very one to ſupport his own ſentiments, that we 'might ſpend the whole time of our ſervice before 'we could come to any concluſion. I acknowledge 'it is a fixed principle, that every beaſt ſhould be 'kept only on his own maſter's grounds; but, I 'hope you will be ſenſible, it is only a ſpeculative 'point which beaſt belongs to one maſter, and 'which to another. On this ſubject, wiſe and good 'ſervants have differed in all ages, and will differ 'to the end of the world.'

A fourth delivered the following opinion. 'I 'cannot help being againſt the motion, for a reaſon 'that no body has yet taken notice of. I can aſ-'ſure you, from my certain knowledge, it would 'give great pleaſure to the ſtrange cattle them-'ſelves, and, in particular to the bull who ſeems to 'have given occaſion to the preſent debate. He 'has a vaſt ſatisfaction in being gazed upon and 'wondered at, which would be the certain conſe-'quence of this attempt. Beſides, he is infected 'with an inveterate itch, which gives him an infi-'nite pleaſure in being driven through the gaps of 'hedges, and being ſcrubbed and clawed by the 'thorns in the paſſage.'

A fifth ſaid, 'I am ſurprized to ſee ſo much time 'ſpent upon this ridiculous propoſal. The author 'of it ſeems to have forgot a fundamental law of the 'corporation, that no ſervant ſhould meddle with 'the affairs of another family, or pretend to take 'the inſpection or government of any beaſts but

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'ſuch as belong to his own maſter. Now, ſays he, 'this is manifeſtly the caſe in the preſent inſtance; 'nay, it is even implied in the propoſal itſelf, 'which is, therefore, quite irregular and incompe-'tent. If that bull does not belong to us, let his 'own maſter ſend for him when he pleaſes; we 'have nothing to do with him. Let us mind our 'own affairs.'

Then roſe a ſervant of ancient ſtanding, ſeveral of his teeth having been loſt by old age, who bore a particular mark of his maſter's favour. He was remarkable for making long ſpeeches, of which it was difficult to comprehend the meaning. After ſpeaking about half an hour, quite unintelligibly, he concluded thus. 'Brethren, I do not deny, 'that ſuch a propoſal as this might have done 'very well in former times, when the fences were 'almoſt entire, and the offending ſtrangers very few; 'but, at preſent, it is quite romantick and impoſ-'ſible. Will any man ſeriouſly pretend, at this 'time of day, when the hedges are almoſt wholly 'broke down, and ſo many encroachments on eve-'ry hand, to affirm, that none ought to continue 'in the incloſures but ſuch as truly belong to our 'maſter. I am afraid his fields would make a 'very deſolate appearance, for there would be few 'left behind.'

Laſt of all, one tells them in a few words, that the debate was altogether idle; that there was a miſtake at the very bottom of the affair: for, by the

beſt information he could procure, the beaſt in queſtion was not a bull, but an ox.

To ſum up the matter, one or other of theſe various and contradictory reaſons prevailed upon a great majority, to come to this reſolution, That it was not prudent or expedient, at this time, to agree to the propoſal; and, therefore, the intruders in general ſhould be winked at, and that beaſt in particular, whether he were bull or ox, ſhould continue where he was.

CHAP. X.

Of the ambition and covetouſneſs of the Servants, and the various methods they fell upon to gratify their deſires.

I Have obſerved before, that the conſtitution in this province was framed with great care, and ſeemed particularly calculated to prevent ambition and love of pre-eminence. For this reaſon, they eſtabliſhed a parity among the ſervants, and took every meaſure they could think of, to prevent the introduction of overſeers and archoverſeers. By this time, however, the ſervants had not only degenerated in point of fidelity and diligence, but had made great encroachments upon the conſtitution itſelf. They had a prodigious hankering after the high-ſounding titles, and immenſe revenues, which were given to ſervants in the neighbouring province.

vince. It grieved them to hear, and ſometimes, when ſent upon buſineſs to that country, to ſee, that ſome of the overſeers lived in ſplendid palaces, and were carried about in chariots, while they themſelves were ſtill obliged to wear the dreſs of ſervants, and generally to walk a-foot.

Gladly would they have introduced theſe offices in their own province; but the great men, who had hitherto aſſiſted them, dreaded the expence, and would not agree to it. They were, therefore, obliged to proceed cautiouſly and gradually. In ſome few inſtances, they made it appear, that one ſervant might be introduced to two different families, and enjoy both the ſalaries. As to the work, they might be ſometimes in the one, and ſometimes in the other; or, if one of them was a family of ſmall conſequence, they might do well enough without any ſervant at all. They begged, in the moſt abject manner, of the governor of the province, that a ſmall number of ſalaries might be appointed, without any office annexed to them, by way of gratuities, for the encouragement of good ſervants. This was done; and there followed a terrible competition for obtaining them, which produced a moſt malignant hatred between thoſe who were ſucceſsful and thoſe who were not.

The reader may perhaps imagine, that the hope of meriting theſe ſalaries would excite them to vie with one another, in doing the buſineſs of the families where they ſerved. It was quite the contrary.

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They tried every method of advancement but that only; or, if any did try it in that way, they were ſure to be diſappointed. Some of them uſed the old way of flattery, which had always a very great effect. Some became political tools, ſpies, and informers to the prevailing party at court. Some were not aſhamed to become pimps and pandars to great men, and even ſometimes to attend them in their nocturnal expeditions. Some endeavoured to make themſelves remarkable for feats and atchievements quite out of the way of their own buſineſs. One of them, for example, would make a windmill, of curious ſtructure, and put it upon the top of the houſe where he lived. The conſequence of this was, that paſſengers going that way, after ſtanding ſtill and admiring it a little, would aſk any perſon they ſaw near, who had done it. The anſwer immediately followed, *The ſervant who lives here, he is a moſt ingenious fellow, as ever was ſeen.* Thus was his fame ſpread abroad, and ſometimes came to the ears of the people above.

I cannot help particularly mentioning one, who was the moſt ſucceſsful of all that had gone before him, who was alive when my informer left the country, and probably may be alive at this very time. The method he fell upon, was telling wonderful ſtories of the heroic actions of that people's predeceſſors, a ſubject of which they were enthuſiaſtically fond. He had acquired a very great knack of ſtory-telling, and could deſcribe things ſo to the life,

life, both by word and geſture, that every body was delighted to hear him. He immediately gave over all work in the family to which he belonged; and when they civilly put him in mind of his neglect, he told them they might go about their buſineſs, for they were a pack of ſeditious ſcoundrels, altogether below his notice. He was a fellow of uncommon ability; and no leſs remarkable for enterpriſe and reſolution. He carried on his ſchemes; procured for himſelf one ſalary after another; and did not fail to laugh at the ſimplicity of thoſe who beſtowed them, ſaying among his intimate companions, *He bleſſed God that mankind were ſo eaſily deceived, by the formal countenance of a ſervant.*

The ſupernumerary ſalaries, however, were ſo few, that they were ſoon exhauſted, and did little elſe, indeed, than excite a hungering and thirſting after more. To remedy this, they fell upon a method of gratifying the vanity of thoſe whoſe pockets they could not fill. A title was invented, which, (like the honorary rewards of the ancients in this part of the world) they ſaid, would ſerve to diſtinguiſh illuſtrious merit, and raiſe a happy emulation. The title was, Maſter of Service; and the directors of the ſchools or places of exerciſe were appointed to beſtow it, according to the ſkill and proficiency of the candidates. Immediately applications came in from all quarters, and it was dealt about very liberally, and, if poſſible, even more abſurdly than the ſalaries had been before. There was hard-

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ly an inſtance of its being beſtowed for real knowledge or uſeful induſtry; but for ſome whimſical qualification of a different kind. If a man had invented a new dance or ſong, or collected a whole barrel of ſalted butterflies in one ſummer, or made a gold chain for binding a flea to a poſt, he was inſtantly created a Maſter of Service.

CHAP. XI.

Of the ſentiments of the People concerning the Servants, and their manner of treating them.

THE reader may probably be wondering in himſelf, how the people behaved in theſe circumſtances, and what became of their affairs. He may be ready to think, that their patience muſt be by this time nearly exhauſted, and ſome terrible revolution at hand. The truth is, the patience of many of them had been at an end for many years; but, being divided among themſelves, their influence was not ſufficient to produce a general change. It is impoſſible to mention all the effects which the conduct of the ſervants had upon the people; but it will be worth while to take particular notice of two claſſes of men, and their behaviour upon the ſubject.

One ſet of people roſe among them, whoſe ſentiments and conduct were as ſingular and extraordinary, as any thing recorded in this book. They were

were men who made high pretenſions to reaſon and penetration, and gave themſelves much to abſtract reflections upon the nature of things. They were of opinion, that all the wiſdom of the nation centered in themſelves; and that all the reſt were downright fools or madmen. However, entering upon their ſpeculations with ſuch an overweening conceit of themſelves, their boaſted reaſon firſt led them into many miſtakes, and at laſt fairly turned their heads.

It was their cuſtom to ſearch into hiſtory, and particularly into the hiſtory of the ſervants. There they found, that, in every age, there had been a great deal of knavery among the ſervants. All the inſtances of this ſort they uſed to collect, publiſh, and compare with the conduct of the ſervants in their own times; which they expoſed with the greateſt ſeverity. At laſt, by long dwelling upon this ſubject, they came to be of opinion, that there ought to be no ſuch thing in nature as a ſervant; that they never had done any thing but harm; and that the world would be much better without them. Sometimes ſober-minded people attempted to ſet them to rights, and alledged, that, tho' the diſhoneſt had always been too numerous as well as noiſy, yet ſtill there were ſome of great worth and uſefulneſs; nay, that ſociety, in the nature of things, could not ſubſiſt without perſons in lower ſtations, to ſerve and accommodate thoſe in higher. This was ſo far from having an effect upon them, that they became always more poſitive

upon contradiction, and ſcarce ever failed to advance opinions ſtill more wild and romantic than before. Inſtead of yielding that ſervants were neceſſary in ſociety, they affirmed, that it was not only deſirable, but extremely poſſible, to have a whole nation of lords, without one perſon among them of inferior degree.

They affirmed, that excepting ſervants, all other men were by nature wiſe, honeſt, and active; fully ſufficient for their own happineſs; and that they would have been quite virtuous and happy, without any exception, if they had not been blindfolded and deceived by the ſervants. To this race, whom they uſed often in a fit of raving, to curſe in a moſt dreadful manner, they imputed all the envy, malice, oppreſſion, covetouſneſs, fraud, rapine, and bloodſhed that ever had happened ſince the beginning of the world. In ſupport of their ſcheme, they made learned diſquiſitions on nature, and the firſt cauſe of all things. They ſhewed that nature was, and muſt be wiſe and good in all her productions; and, therefore, that man muſt needs be free from every thing that is evil, and his original conſtitution perfectly juſt and ſound. All the diſorders that were to be ſeen in ſociety were eaſily accounted for, from the helliſh machinations of the ſervants. In the mean time, it was obvious, that the ſervants were the product of nature too; and according to the ſame reaſoning, muſt have been of as gentle and tractable diſpoſitions, and in all reſpects

ſpects as faultleſs as their maſters. This manifeſt difficulty in their own ſcheme, however unaccountable it may appear, they never once reflected upon, nor by conſequence attempted to reſolve.

Sometimes they were preſſed with the neceſſity of ſervants to cultivate the ground, which, if neglected, it was plain, would grow over with briers and thorns, and every noxious weed. Here they immediately recurred to their old argument, the excellency of nature's productions; and, upon the ſtrength of it, preſumed abſolutely to deny the fact. They ſaid, were the earth only left to itſelf, it would produce nothing but what was uſeful and ſalutary, and that in great abundance, for the ſupport of its inhabitants; that all the pretended cultivation of it by the ſervants was but ſpoiling it; and that they themſelves had ſowed the ſeeds of every hurtful or unneceſſary plant. It was to no purpoſe to mention to them, either the vaſt tracts of uncultivated ground, or the deſolate condition of a neglected field; all this, they pretended, aroſe from a certain ſympathy in the ſeveral parts of the earth one with another, and from poiſonous vapours eaſily carried by the wind, from the places where ſervants had been at work. In ſhort, they ſometimes projected a ſcheme for a new ſettlement where no ſervants ſhould be admitted; and where they hoped, in a little time, every man would be as wiſe as a philoſopher, as rich as a merchant, and as magnificent as a king.

After all, the perfection of their abſurdity appeared in the following circumſtance. Though it was plain, to any perſon of reflexion, that their delirium took its riſe from the tricks and misbehaviour of bad ſervants, yet they had the moſt rooted and inveterate antipathy at thoſe that were good. The reaſon, probably was, that the diligence and uſefulneſs of this laſt ſort ſtood directly in the way of their ſcheme, and prevented the reſt of the nation from being of their opinion. All ſeemingly good ſervants they affirmed to be at bottom arrant knaves; and in one reſpect, unſpeakably worſe than any of the reſt, becauſe they appeared to be better. The idle, ſlothful, worthleſs ſervants, were frequently their companions; and it was one of their higheſt entertainments to lead ſuch fellows into frolicks, miſchief, or debauchery, and then point them out to their fellow citizens, and uſe words to this purpoſe, 'You poor hood-winked fools, do you 'ſee theſe raſcals? why will you any longer har-'bour them in your houſes? they are all of one 'complexion, and will infallibly bring you to mi-'ſery and ſpeedy deſtruction.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

Continuation of the ſame ſubject. The ſentiments and conduct of others, in conſequence of the behaviour of the ſervants.

WE are not to ſuppoſe that the whole nation loſt their ſenſes. No: by far the greater number acted as prudently and rationally as men could do in their circumſtances. According to plain common ſenſe, in proportion as corruption and degeneracy increaſed among the ſervants, they ſet the higher value on ſuch as were honeſt and faithful. They uſed every mean in their power to procure ſuch for their own families, agreeably to the laws of the corporation. When this could not be brought about, or when a good-for-nothing-fellow was buckled to the ſalary, they put themſelves to the additional expence of hiring one according to their own mind; paid the former his wages duly, and only deſired the favour of him to give them no trouble, but ſpend his time according to his own fancy.

It was pleaſant enough to obſerve the different conduct of the eſtabliſhed ſervants, according to their different tempers, when they fell under this predicament. Some of them were greatly enraged to ſee the ſervice of another preferred to theirs, uſed many artful methods to prevent it where they could,

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and took every opportunity of venting their malice, or glutting their revenge when they could not. Where they could get any body to believe them, they aſſerted that all ſkill and power of doing good was confined to the corporation; that it was inherent in them, and deſcended in their blood from one generation to another, like courage in the race of game cocks. The others, they pretended, were a ſpurious brood, and that it was impoſſible to train them ſo as to make them fit for ſervice.

If this did not gain credit, all poſſible pains were taken to diſparage the conduct of the additional ſervants. Their work was examined with the greateſt ſtrictneſs, every flaw in it pointed out, and many faults imputed to it merely through envy. If any piece of work appeared to be ſubſtantial, they pretended it wanted neatneſs, and was altogether inelegant. This charge, however, made little impreſſion upon the people. They had been ſo long plagued with ſervants who minded nothing but ornament, both in their perſons and their work, that they were rather pleaſed than diſguſted with one of a more homely carriage.

When nothing elſe would do, the groſſeſt lies and calumnies were ſpread, both of the new ſervants and thoſe who employed them. It was pretended, that they ſowed the ſeeds of ſedition and diſaffection, in the families where they got admittance. Sometimes this accuſation, tho' utterly groundleſs, obtained ſuch credit with the governors, that, if they had a com-

complaint to make, or a cauſe to try, they could ſcarcely expect juſtice. It was alſo alledged, that they terrified the children out of their wits, by telling frightful ſtories in the winter evenings. You might meet with many of the eſtabliſhed ſervants who aſſerted, and even ſeemed to believe, that all who employed any other than themſelves, were idiots or crack-brained, and deſtitute of common ſenſe.

On the other hand, not a few of the eſtabliſhed ſervants were altogether indifferent how many others were hired, and how little work was left to themſelves. They knew that their wages were well ſecured to them; which was the main chance; and they found rather more time and liberty to follow the bent of their inclinations. Perhaps they would have been better ſatisfied if the people had been content with what kind and quality of work they thought proper to do. But, as this was not to be expected, the hiring of others rendered all matters perfectly eaſy, and their lives were one continued ſcene of indolence or pleaſure.

In the mean time, it was highly diverting to hear how they expreſſed themſelves upon this ſubject, and with how much art and cunning they made a virtue of neceſſity. They uſed to extol their own candour and benevolence. 'Gentlemen,' one of them would ſay, 'you ſee with what diſcretion 'I uſe you. I am always glad to ſee liberty prevail, 'and every man ſuffered to do what ſeems proper 'to himſelf. I am well pleaſed, that you ſhould hire

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'as many ſervants as you incline. I aſk no more, 'than that I may have a clean neat bed-chamber, in 'a convenient part of the houſe, my wages well and 'regularly paid, and a ſmall bit of ground in the 'garden to bring up a few delicious herbs and fruits 'for my own uſe. If theſe things are properly at-'tended to, you ſhall find me a good man to live 'with; I ſhall never interfere with your work in 'the leaſt, or give you any manner of trouble, even 'by making remarks upon it.' In ſuch a caſe, it would happen now and then, that one of the family, touched a little with the abſurdity of this phlegmatick ſpeech, would anſwer, 'That very well 'he might make himſelf eaſy, ſince, all the while, 'he was well fed and clothed at their expence.' This he would receive with ſilent contempt, and diſplay the greateſt ſatisfaction in his own compoſure of ſpirit, and meekneſs of temper.

As for the remaining part of the nation, they reflected very little upon their condition, but took ſuch ſervants as were ſent to them, and rubbed on as well as could. Such quiet and paſſive people were highly extolled by the ſervants, who took all opportunities of declaring, that they were the only ſolid and rational perſons in the whole kingdom. Theſe praiſes delighted them greatly; ſo that they lived as poor and as merry as beggars, who have nothing to hope, and nothing to fear.

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CONCLUSION.

THUS I have given the reader an account of this extraordinary claſs of men; and, I am certain, he muſt confeſs, there is ſomething in their characters and conduct, proper to excite a mixture of laughter and indignation. It is alſo probable, that he feels a conſiderable degree of ſympathy with the deluded and oppreſſed people, and is anxious to know, whether there appeared any proſpect of deliverance. This was a queſtion I often aſked my informer, who aſſured me that, from what he had heard and ſeen, there was not the moſt diſtant proſpect of reformation by the ſervants themſelves. The honeſter ſort were always borne down, traduced and ſundered; and thoſe of an oppoſite character had ſo long kept the management of the corporation in their hands, that they reckoned themſelves ſecure in their authority, and openly ſet at defiance both the people in general, and their fellow ſervants.

There remained juſt a glimpſe of hope from one quarter, *viz.* the gentlemen who had been choſen to the office of helpers. They had at firſt contributed as much as any to the introduction of wrong meaſures; but, not being under the temptation of intereſt, they began to open their eyes at laſt. For ſome years they had been a conſiderable reſtraint upon the violence of the ſervants, and had prevent-

ed them in ſeveral inſtances from degrading, ſtripping, and branding thoſe who had incurred their diſpleaſure, by doing buſineſs at unſeaſonable hours. They had alſo contributed to the diſgrace and diſmiſſion of ſome drunken ſots, and laſcivious wretches, whom ſeveral of the leading ſervants had a ſtrong inclination to ſpare. From theſe circumſtances, ſome flattered themſelves that a change might be brought about; and that, though the ſervants would never think of any reformation themſelves, it would ſoon be *forced upon them by a foreign hand.*

After all, it was but very uncertain whether any material change would ſoon take place; and therefore, while we can only ſend that unhappy people our good wiſhes, we have reaſon to rejoice in our own good fortune, that we are perfectly free from impoſitions of the ſame or any ſimilar kind.

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